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**Media Release**  
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**Biden Announces Expanded Initiative to Combat Neighborhood Crime**  
*Landlord training June 9 in Harrington to focus on proven techniques to reduce crime in rental properties*

**Wilmington** – As part of its ongoing action to reduce crime and improve the quality of life in throughout Delaware, Attorney General Beau Biden announced today that his office is expanding its landlord training initiative to give property owners the knowledge and tools they need to combat criminal activity on their properties and avoid legal sanctions under the state’s Drug Nuisance and Social Vices Abatement Act. Four day-long trainings have already been held by his Nuisance Abatement Program in Wilmington. The next landlord training session – to take place Saturday, June 9 in Harrington – expands the initiative statewide.

“Over the past year we have trained more than 200 landlords on how to reduce neighborhood crime,” Biden said. “Landlords may not live on the same streets where they own rental properties, but they still have responsibilities to those communities. Our training gives owners information they need to prevent and respond to crime that occurs on their properties, but also makes it clear that we will take legal action against them if they allow that activity to take place.”

The Attorney General’s landlord training initiative addresses a pattern of criminal activity at rental properties. The initial focus was the City of Wilmington, where approximately half of its 32,000 properties are rentals. The majority of criminal nuisance complaints in Wilmington and statewide that have been referred to Biden’s Nuisance Abatement Program stem from rental properties whose owners often claim to be unaware of the illegal activity on-site. These landlords frequently fail to perform criminal background checks on their tenants, and often have deficient leases and rental applications, or none at all.

To proactively reduce crime in rental properties, the Attorney General’s Office is holding day-long training seminars to ensure that property owners understand their responsibilities under the law and have the tools to not only be effective landlords, but responsible community members as well. The next training will be held **Saturday, June 9 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Harrington Fire House, 50 Clark Street**. It will feature presenters from the Attorney General’s Office, police, and private legal practices. Presentations will cover topics including identifying gang and drug activity, criminal background screening, eviction proceedings, Fair Housing laws, nuisance property laws, and crime prevention through environmental design. The trainings are focused on landlords, but are open to anyone. While training is voluntary, failure to attend or failure to abide by the suggestions will be factored into determining future courses of legal action against certain properties and their owners.

Harrington Police Chief Norman Barlow said about the June 9 training, "We are excited to bring this program to Harrington, I think it will be very helpful to landlords on selecting tenants. We are looking forward to working with the Department of Justice to get this training out to landlords on some important issues when you are renting your property out."

Landlords, tenants, and members of the community who have questions about this week's landlord training, or want to report a property to the Attorney General's office are encouraged to call the Nuisance Abatement Program at (302) 577- 8500.

The Attorney General's Nuisance Abatement program uses the state's Criminal Nuisance Abatement Act to identify and investigate properties where drug, gun and violent crime is permitted to flourish, and offers property owners the choice to abate the nuisance or be forced to defend themselves in court. The Attorney General's office identifies nuisance properties statewide through its own investigations and in cooperation with state and local police agencies, local authorities, civic associations, and neighborhood residents. To date, over 125 nuisances have been abated and nearly 400 properties remain on the Program's "watch list." Additionally, 16 properties have been shut down because they were found to present an immediate threat to the health, safety and welfare of the surrounding community.

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